

REMARKS

Claims 2-20 are now pending in this patent application. Claims 2, 13-16, 19 and 20 are currently amended. Claims 3-12, 17 and 18 are original. Claim 1 is cancelled, without prejudice. No new matter has been introduced.

Applicants acknowledge indication by the Examiner that claims 2 and 4-11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim (claim 1) and any intervening claims. In response, claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of claim 1. We submit that claim 2 as amended overcomes the rejection and is now in condition to be allowed, and that claims 4-11, as dependent from claim 2, are also allowable on that basis.

Claims 1, 14-16, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious and therefore unpatentable over Westerman et al. U.S. 6,031,212 in view of Moser U.S. 5,675,911. In response, claims 14-16, 19 and 20 have been amended to depend from claim 2, and we submit that these claims are now allowable on that basis. As noted above, claim 1 has been cancelled from this application, without prejudice.

Claims 3, 12, 13, 17 and 18 are indicated to be withdrawn for being directed to a non-elected invention. However, these claims are, in fact, directed to provisionally non-elected species, with the election to take effect only if no generic claim was finally held to be allowable. Several of the claims indicated to be generic (in particular, claims 2 and 6-8) have now been indicated to be allowable. We submit, therefore, that claims 3, 12, 13, 17 and 18 directed to a non-elected species should be allowed as well. The examiner is directed to MPEP §809.02(c), which says, in part,

When *all* claims to each of the additional species are embraced by an allowable generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141, applicant must be advised of the allowable generic claim and that claims drawn to the non-elected species are no longer withdrawn since they are fully embraced by the allowed generic claim.

We submit that this application, with claims 2-20, is now in condition for allowance. Early favorable action is solicited.

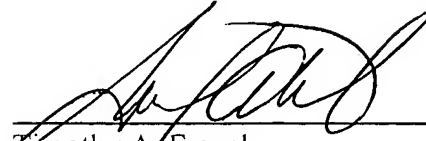
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Respectfully submitted,

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